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HEPCATS

TRIGGER HAPPY TOGETHER

3



Snowblind

Here's a special note of thanks to all the fans, pros, and other folks who have helped *Hepcats* get off on a roll following its shaky start!

Tif and I returned from England at the tail end of July to find a veritable pile of letters waiting to be read (most of which are printed in this issue's extended letters column). There's a great show of support for the book coming from all over the country, as well as in Canada, where orders are still pretty low (typical, I hear; in Canada you aren't a publication until you have four issues out in a year, I'm told).

I must admit my often impetuous optimism never allowed for the idea that the book would fail (why else would I start an 18-issue graphic novel in #3?), but the response has been far beyond my expectations!

Amazing Heroes raved about issue #1 in its own 169th issue, and in the following *Preview Special* Edd Vick, of the incipient Miscellania Unlimited Press, had a very nice writeup-cum-mini-interview. Also, not long ago I got a phone call from Darrel Boatz, associate editor of *Comics Interview*, who, based upon his reading of the first issue alone, decided I was worth a comics interview. (We're still organizing it.)

But you guys—fans, that is—have been great, just great. Complaints have been few; the only one I've really caught wind of is that some funny-animal fans are disconcerted that they can't really tell what species Arnie and Erica are supposed to be, and my response of "What do you want them to be?" doesn't seem to do much for insta-gratification. Also, some folks have been weirded out by my nothing-sacred sense of humor (yes, Virginia, the bikini ad *was* a joke). But for the most part, since complaints of this nature seem to be along the lines of, "Why isn't *Hepcats* like every other funny animal comic I read?" those of you who *are* hip to what's going on in the book don't have to worry about my taking them too seriously.

Some fans, in their enthusiasm, have expressed hopes that sales will soar and that they'll be able to read *Hepcats* for a long time to come—I hope I certainly intend to fulfill. But you know, the best people equipped to see that happen are you folks. Tell all your friends about *Hepcats*. I can do as many fliers and magazine ads as I like, and reviewers can smile my direction and distributors plug away, but the best way to get a response from the dealers—many of whom are understandably biased against independents, no matter how good they are, as a result of the mid-'80's glut—is to keep demanding they carry the book 'til they get the message.

If your favorite comics shop isn't carrying *Hepcats*, or if they're ordering so few that they sell out in two days, bug them over and over to get more copies in, until *Hepcats* is available to you and your friends and their friends. If dealers know there are people out there who want a book, they'll eventually cave in and carry it. Word of mouth is the best word of all.

I haven't got any masterpiece or work of genius with *Hepcats* here. But I think it's a goshdarned good book and that there's an audience for it, and that fans everywhere should have a chance to pick it and decide for themselves. So thanks once again! And you can look forward to many more years of *Hepcats*.

YO: A REMINDER

Anyone still interested in buying *Yo*, we still have a good number of copies left—but so far, the vast majority of fan letters I've gotten have come accompanied by orders (another word of thanks here), so we're movin' 'em and you might want to hurry.

But I would like to remind you about payment policies. As I stated in #1 (but not in #2, because of the lack of space, so this is as much my fault), Double Diamond can only accept *certified checks* or *money orders*. Many of you have sent personal checks—please don't. It's not that I don't trust you (though I do want to avoid rubber money), but mainly because out-of-state checks take so long to clear that it's about a week before I can send you your book. And I've found that as this causes orders to stack up—in my attempt to separate the send-now orders from the wait-a-while orders—confusion inevitably results, and some people who sent money orders have their books delayed as well.

And, in the *unlikely* event your check, say, didn't clear, well, on account of my bank's charges, I'd have to be a real dick and hit you with a \$15 returned-check charge, just like at the supermarket. *Yo's* a good book, but it ain't worth 26 bucks.

As I said, I'm at fault because in #2, I didn't make the distinction. But as of now, I hope everything is clear. So please, no personal checks. *Spasiba*.

"SNOWBLIND" BEGINS

So here we go. In this issue, I begin *Snowblind*, my most ambitious project to date and my first full-length graphic novel. As I've already gone through the premise once before, I won't gab on about it again (except to follow briefly the Jim Starlin Law of Ad Nauseam Previous Issue Recapping, and say that it's about Erica's life). But a few questions pop up from fans from time to time that I would like to address, in the way of a preface. Yes, much of the cast is based upon people I know. No, Erica isn't Tifanie, though they share a vocation. No, what happens in *Snowblind* isn't based upon the lives of any one particular friend or acquaintance of mine—but elements of the lives of many people I've known and loved, past and present, come into play, as they do always. Yes, many scenes are taken from real life. Yes, that's the best way to write.

Okey-doke? Very good. On with the show.

See you soon.

Hugs and kisses,



HEPCATS BY MARTIN WAGNER • NUMBER 3

Snowblind

A NOVEL IN 18 CHAPTERS
DOUBLE DIAMOND PRESS • AUSTIN, TEXAS



HEPCATS 3

Created, illustrated, and published by **MARTIN WAGNER**

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Yes logo created by Roger Dean.

THE ONLY SUBJECT
I EVER LIKED IN SCHOOL
WAS ENGLISH.

I LIKE READING.
I READ WHATEVER I CAN
GET MY HANDS ON.

ANYWAY, I'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN SOMETHING
ONE OF MY TEACHERS SAID ONCE. IT WOULD'VE
BEEN 10TH GRADE 'CAUSE THAT'S WHEN
I RAN AWAY.

SHE SAID ANY GOOD STORY
HAD TO HAVE THREE THINGS
NO MATTER WHAT: A BEGINNING,
A MIDDLE AND AN END.

BUT NOT NECESSARILY
IN THAT ORDER...

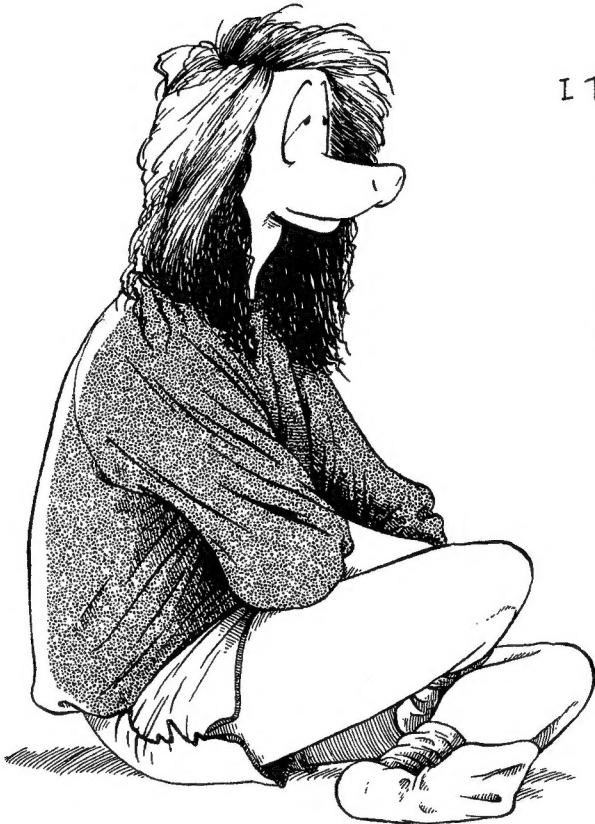
I THOUGHT THAT WAS PRETTY WEIRD.

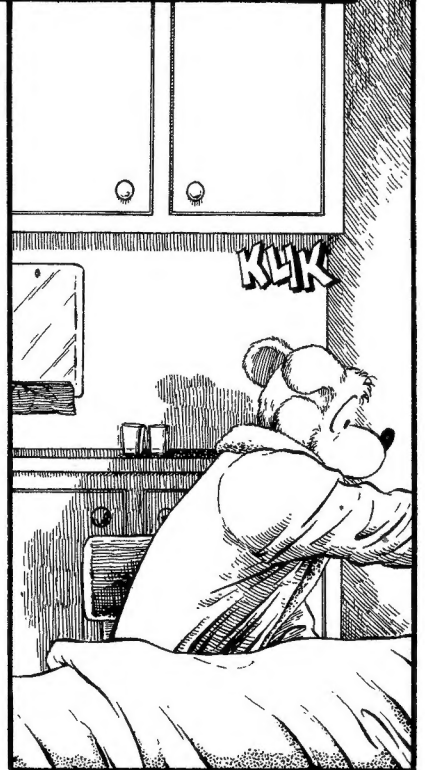
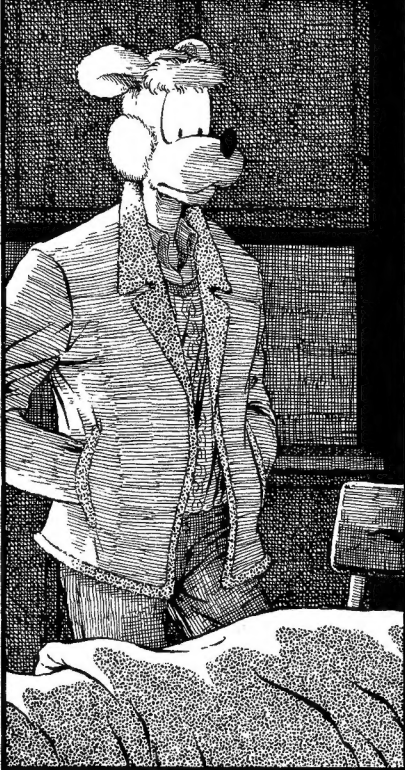
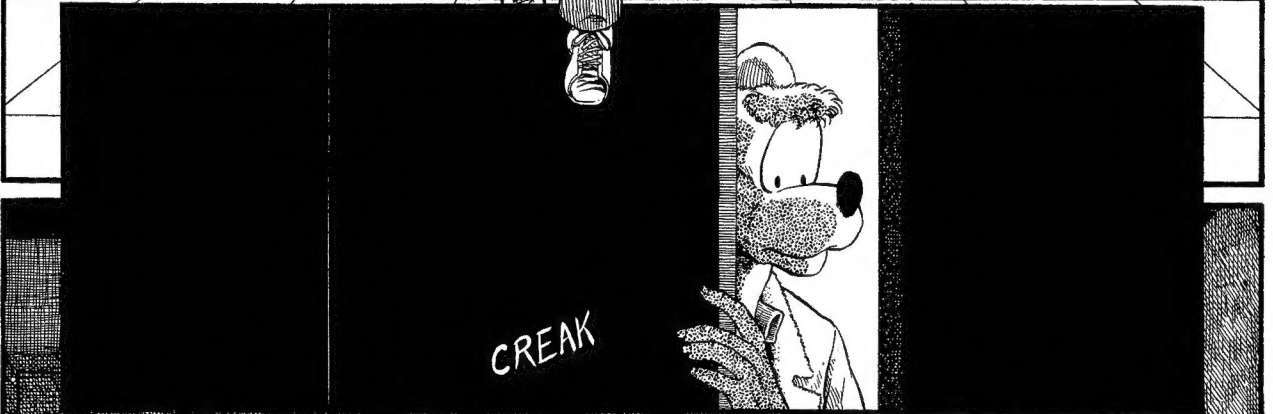
BUT IT MAKES A LOT MORE SENSE NOW.

I MEAN, WHEN I THINK ABOUT
THE WAY MY LIFE HAS GONE, IF
I START AT THE BEGINNING,
IT JUST GETS ALL CONFUSED.

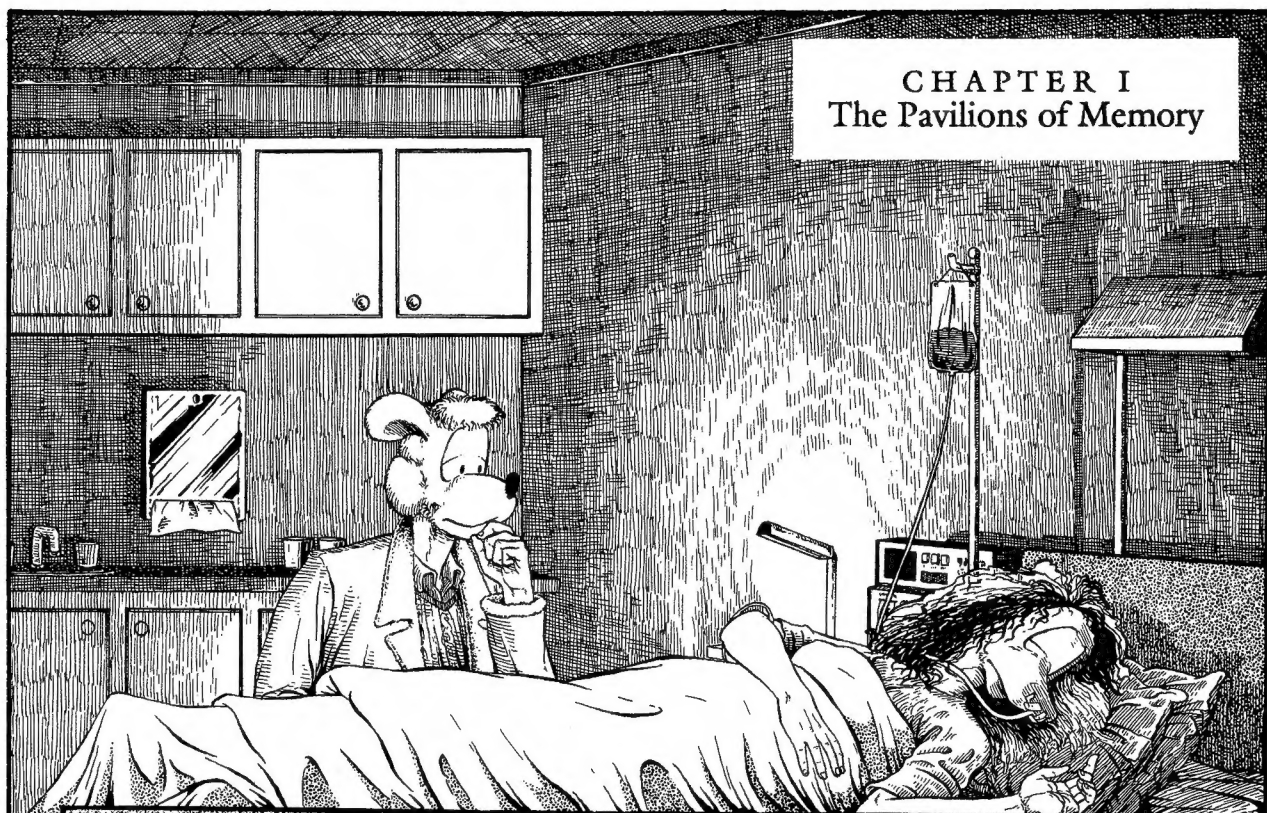
SO IF I WANT
TO UNDERSTAND
ANY OF IT...

...I GUESS I'LL
HAVE TO START WITH
WHAT'S HAPPENING
NOW.

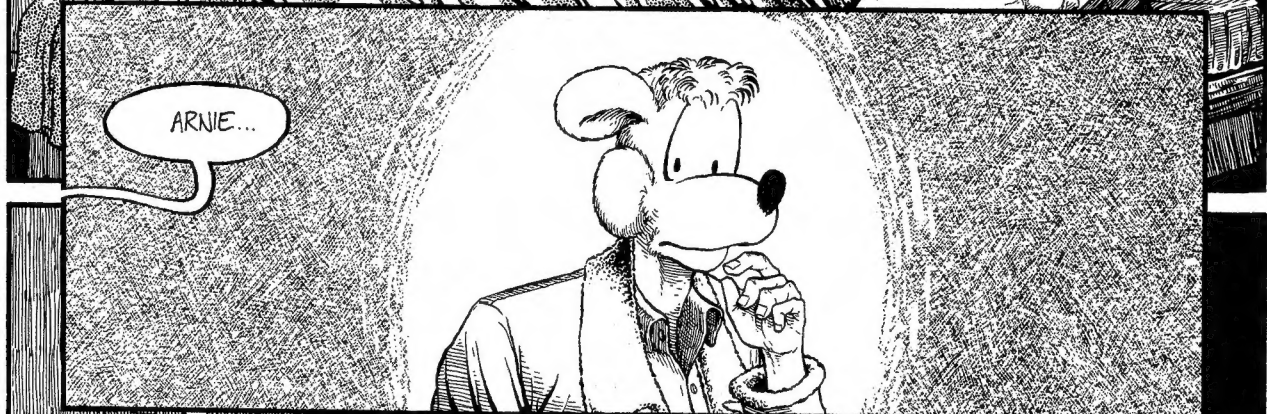




CHAPTER I
The Pavilions of Memory



ARNIE...



OH, HI, DOC.

ARNIE, I NEED
TO TALK TO YOU
OUTSIDE.

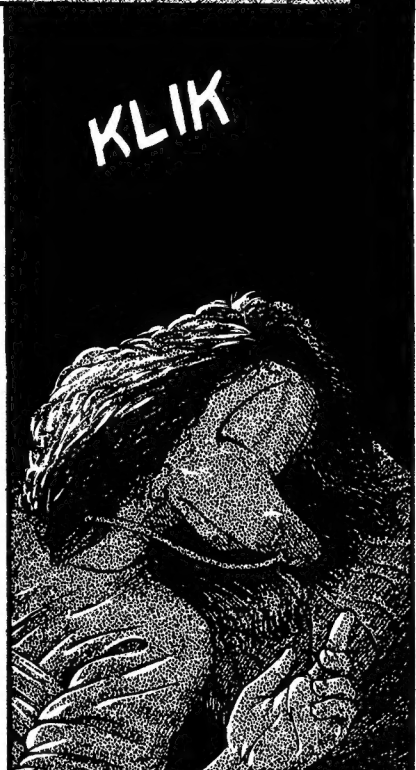


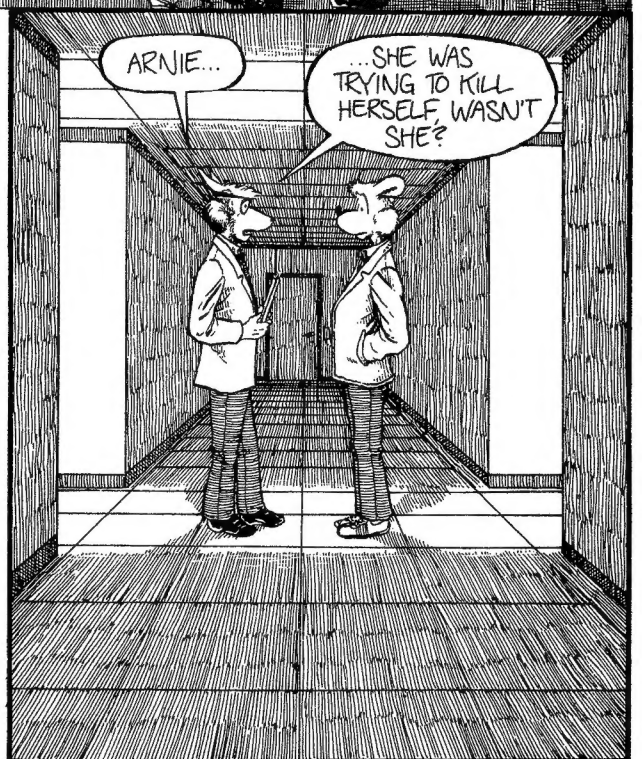
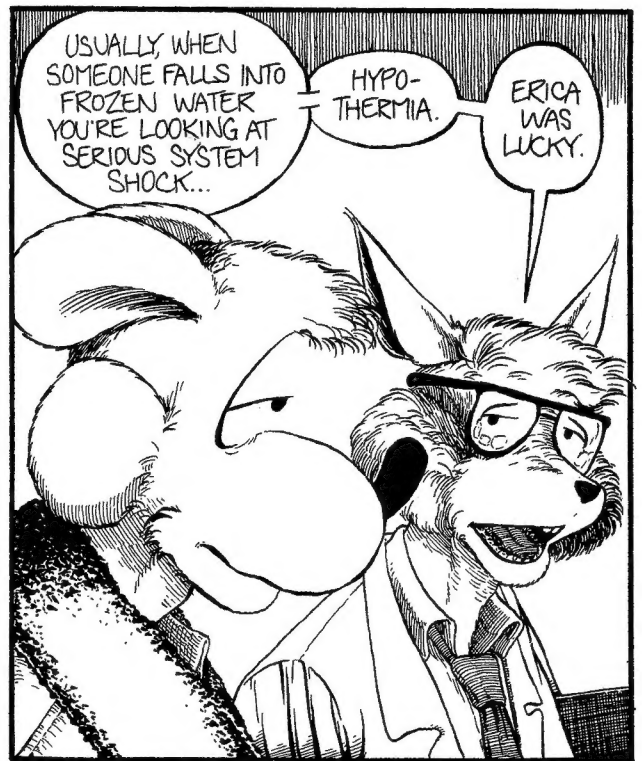
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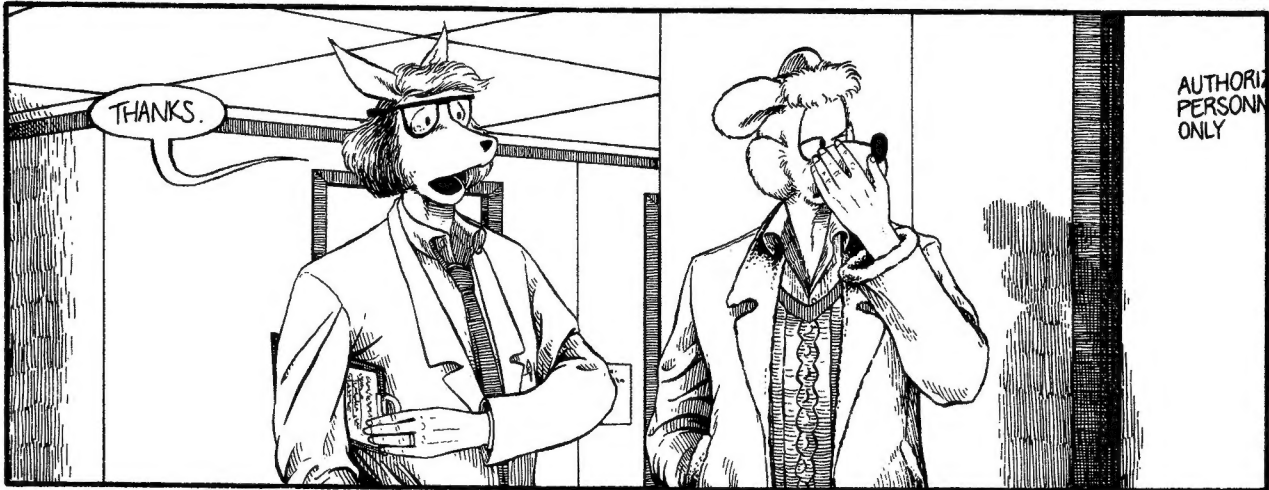
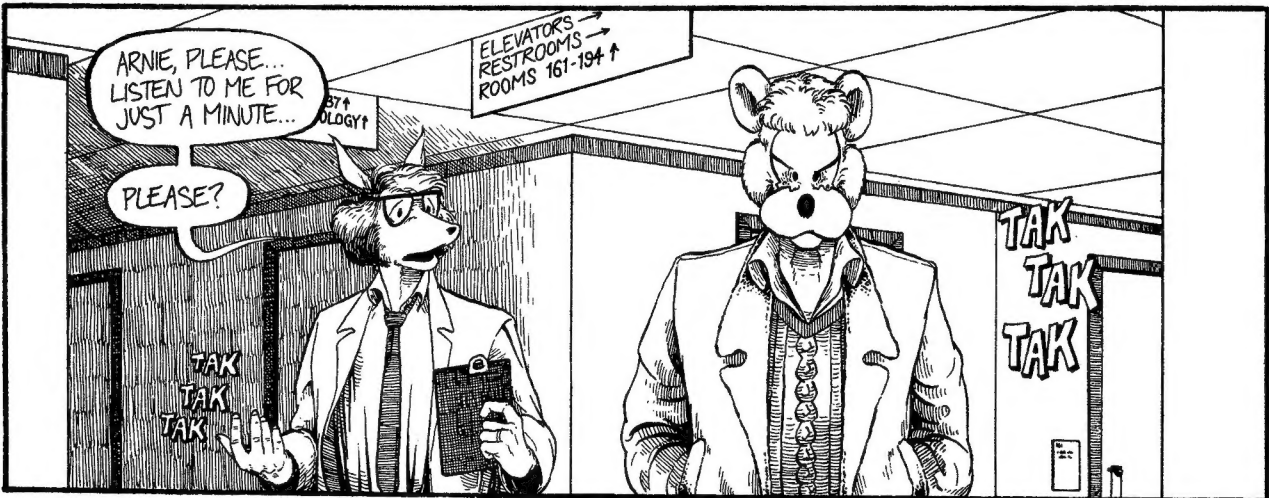
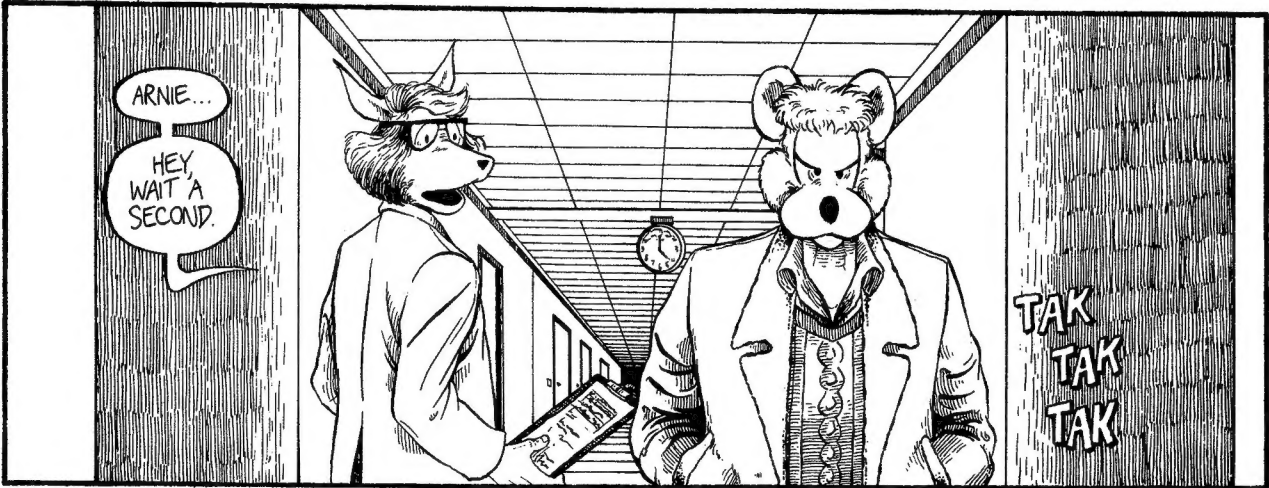
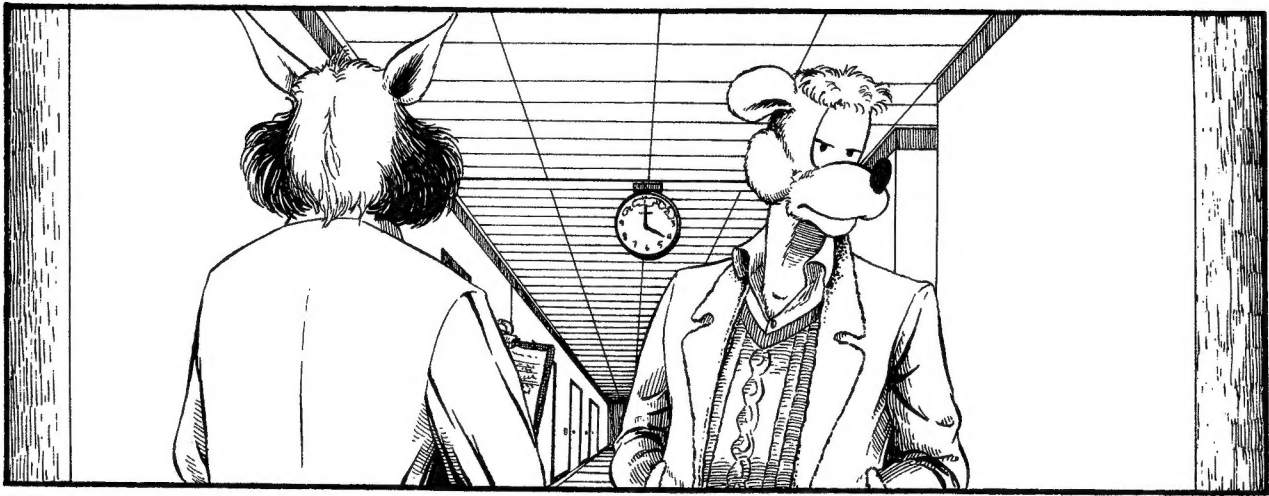
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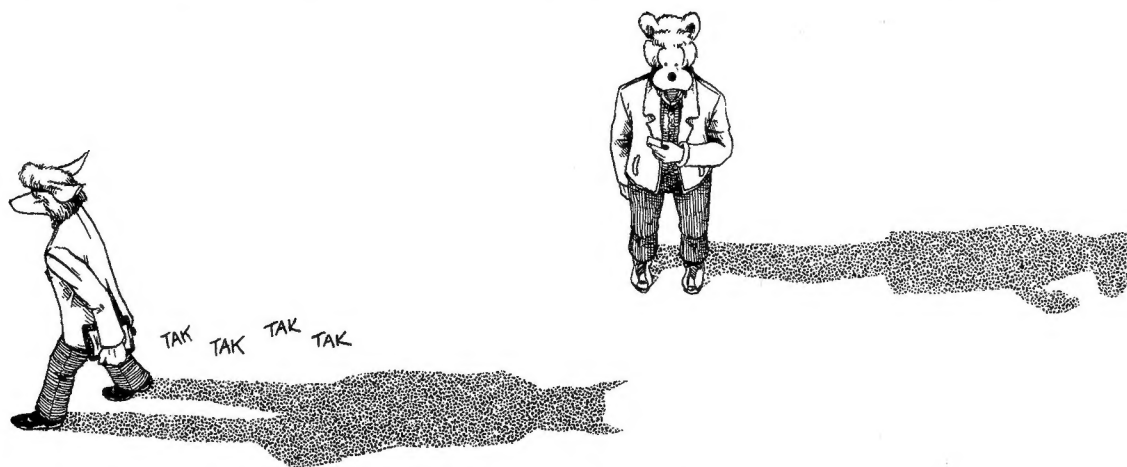
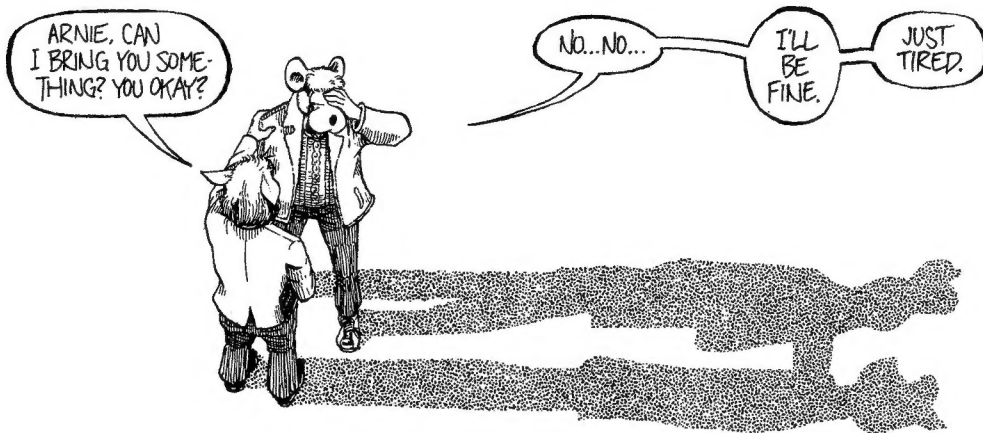


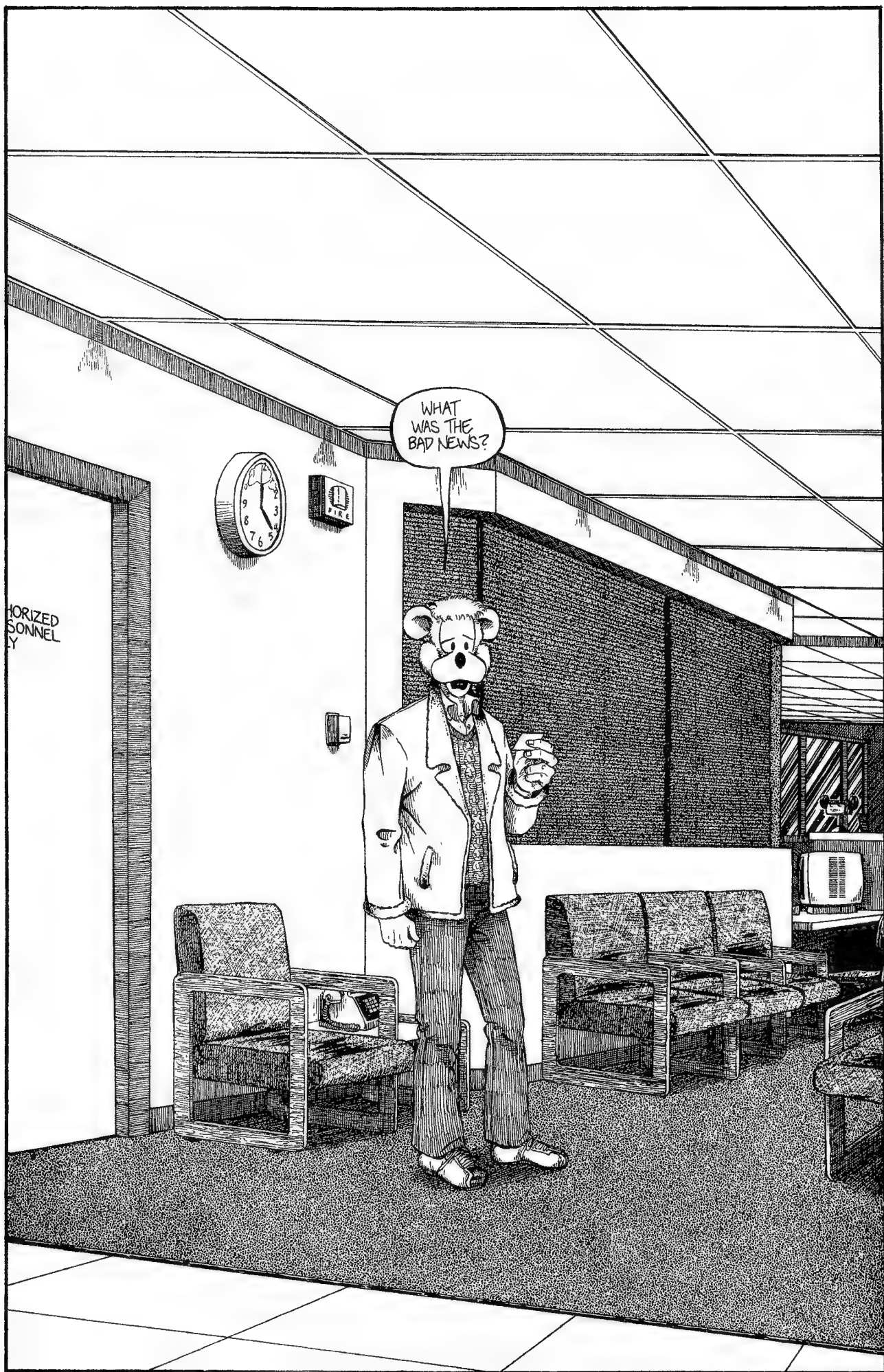
KLIK











OOPS...

SORRY ABOUT THAT.
GUESS WE GOT OFF TO KIND
OF A HEAVY START
THERE.

OH, WELL...

HEY, THIS ISN'T AS EASY AS
IT LOOKS! YOU TRY GOING OVER
YOUR LIFE STORY AND SEE
IF YOU DON'T GET EMBARRASSED!

WELL, LOOK. WHY DON'T WE
SKIP BACK A SHORT WAYS? WE
CAN GO BACK TO—

—WELL—

—THE BEGINNING OF WHAT
GOT ME WHERE I AM NOW.

IT SEEMS LIKE A MORE
NORMAL BEGINNING.

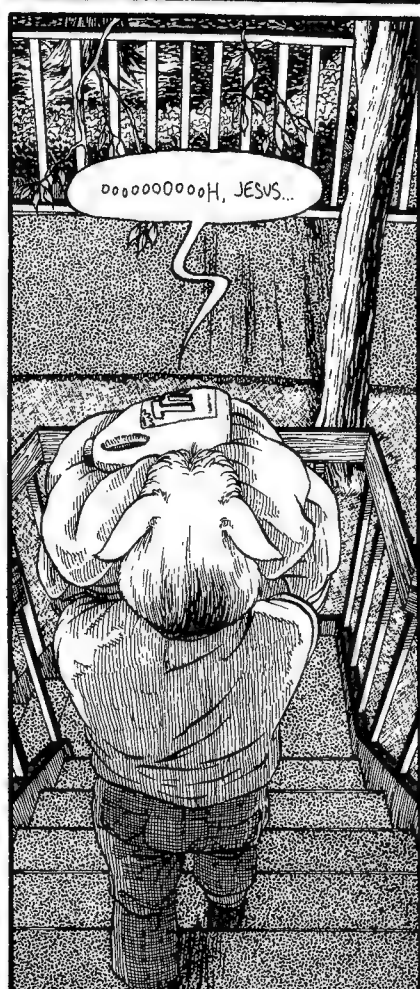
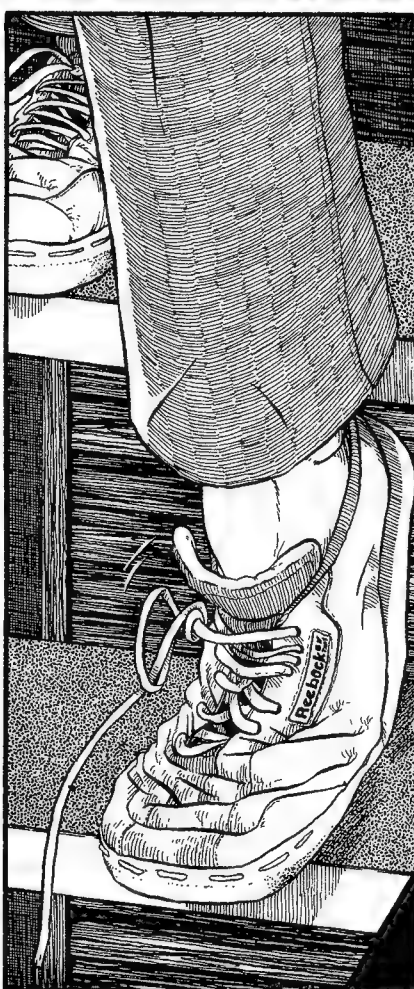
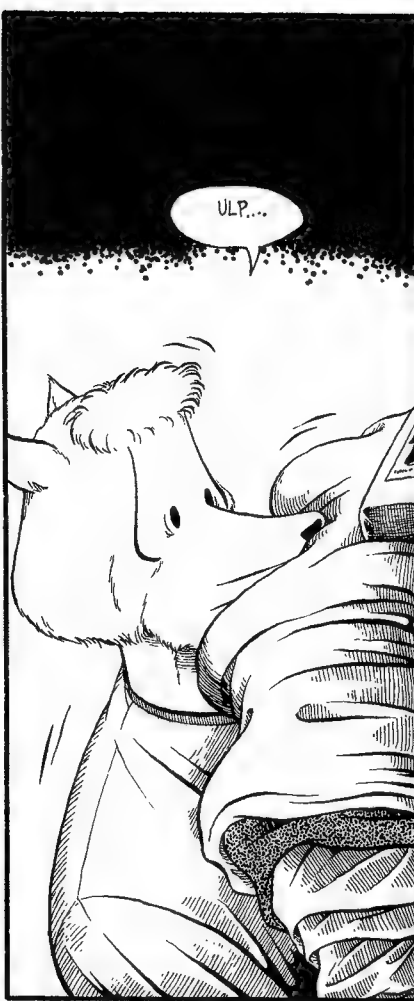
SEE?! I **TOLD** YOU I GET ALL
CONFUSED! I GUESS I GET CONFUSED
NO MATTER WHAT I DO.

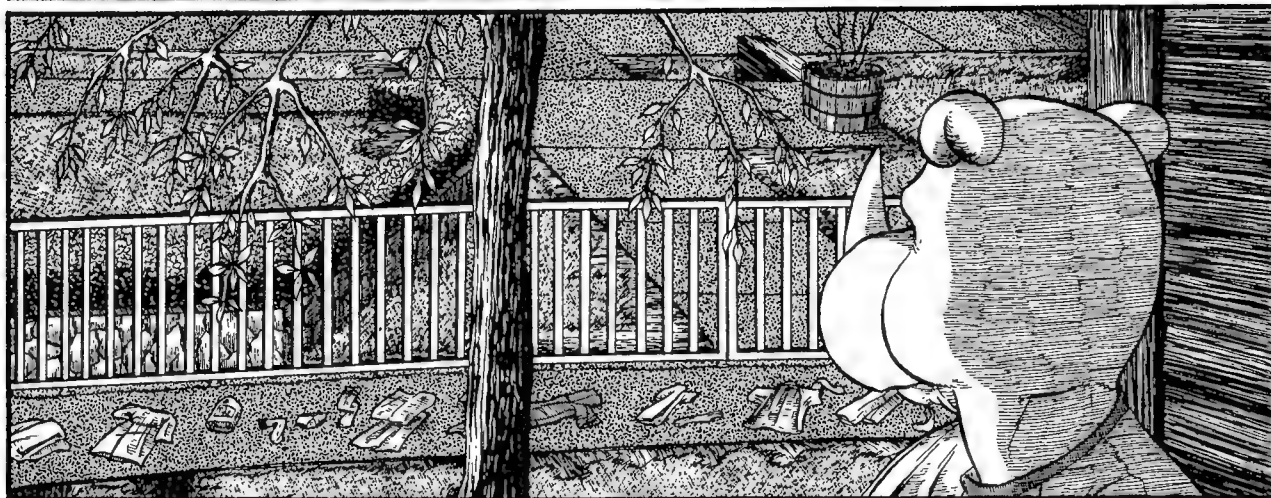
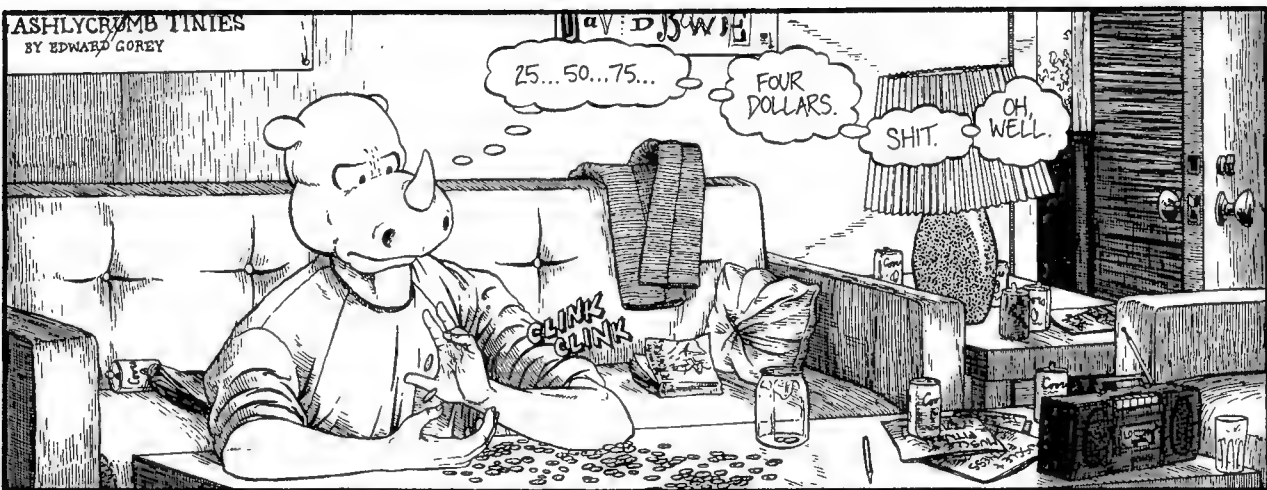
YEAH, I KNOW. WHINE WHINE...BITCH BITCH.

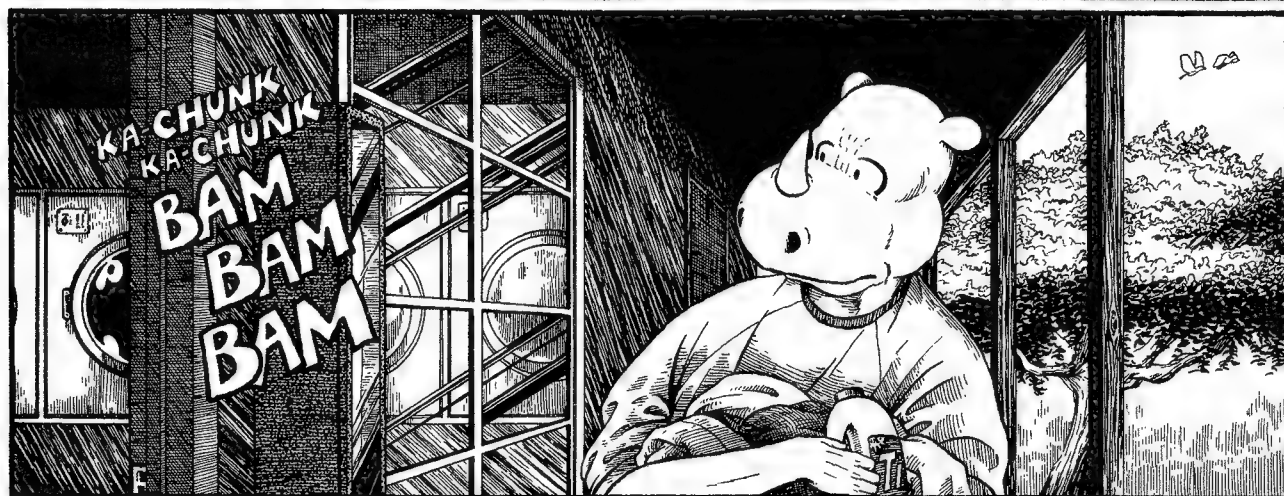
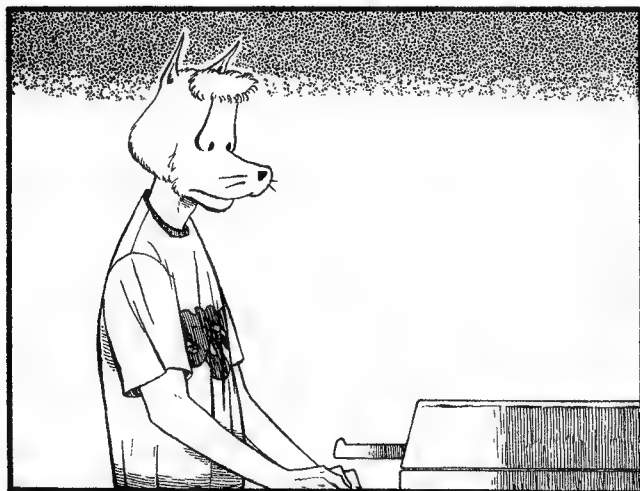
ALL RIGHT ALREADY.
ONCE MORE,
FROM THE MIDDLE!



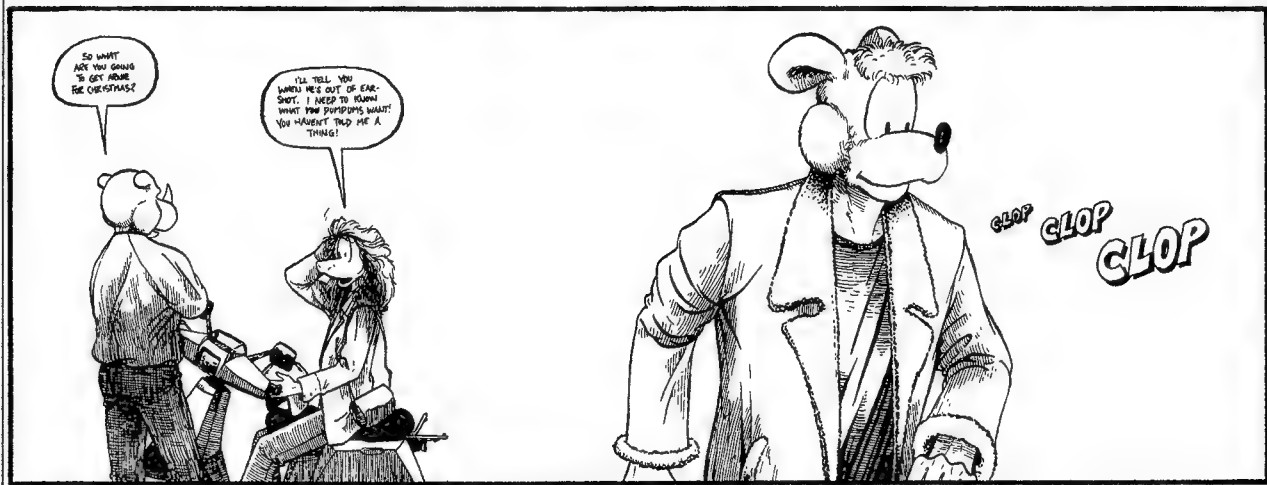
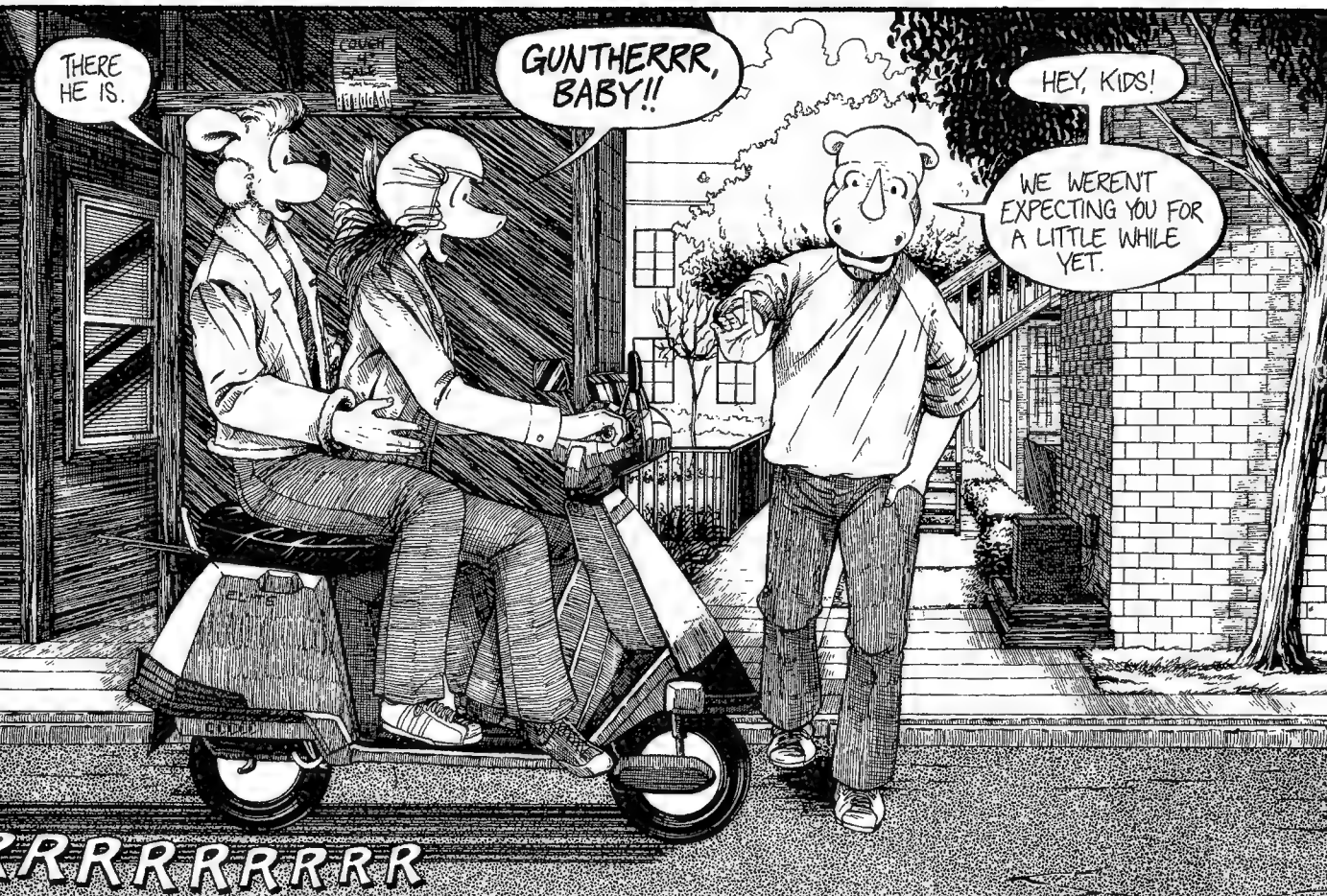














WELL, LISTEN, I
REALLY DONT THINK I
FEEL LIKE COMING...

AH, COME ON,
JOEY! I NEED YOU
TO COME ALONG!

YOU **NEED** ME
TO COME ALONG?

YEAH! I WANT TO SHOW
YOU THE RING I'M GETTING
ERICA. GUNTHER'S GOING TO
BE KEEPING HER BUSY
SO WE CAN HAVE PLENTY OF
TIME TO OURSELVES.

TINK

RING?

THAT'S
RI-I-IGHT!



REALLY,
ARNIE, THIS IS
SOMETHING OF A
MAJOR SURPRISE!

WELL, IT IS
FOR US, TOO, YOU
KNOW...

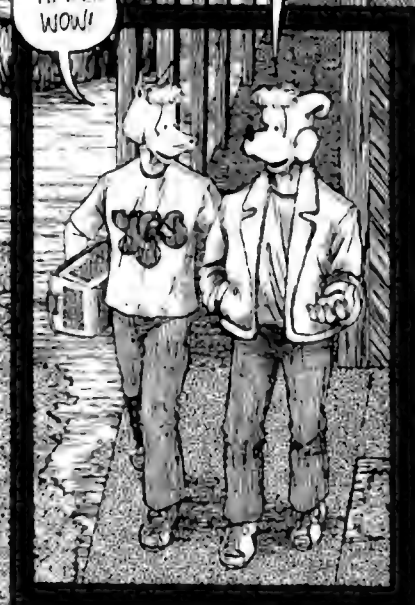
HAVE Y'ALL, LIKE,
SET A DATE YET?

NO, NOTHING REALLY
FIRM. I'M GRADUATING IN
MAY SO WE WANT TO DO
IT IN THE SUMMER

OKAY.

AND WE WERE GONNA SAVE
GETTING THE RINGS UNTIL VAL-
ENTINE'S DAY, 'COS IT'D BE A SPE-
CIAL TIME TO DO IT... RIGHT? BUT
I THOUGHT I'D SURPRISE HER,
AND GET HER HERS FOR CHRISTMAS.

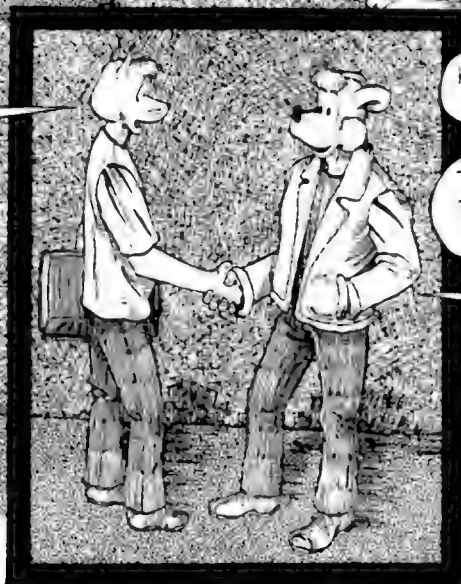
HMM.
WOW!

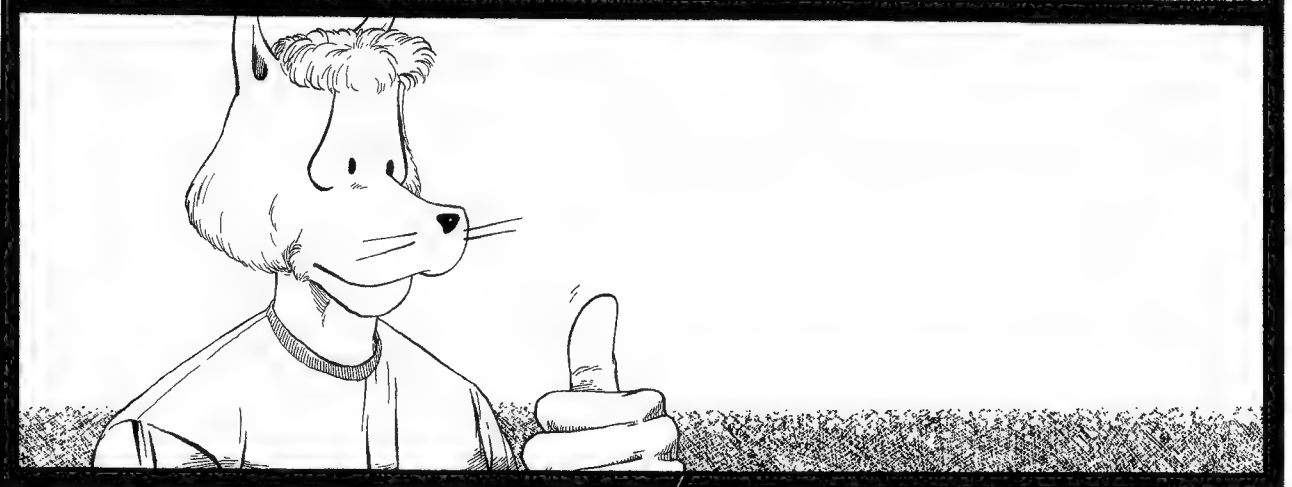
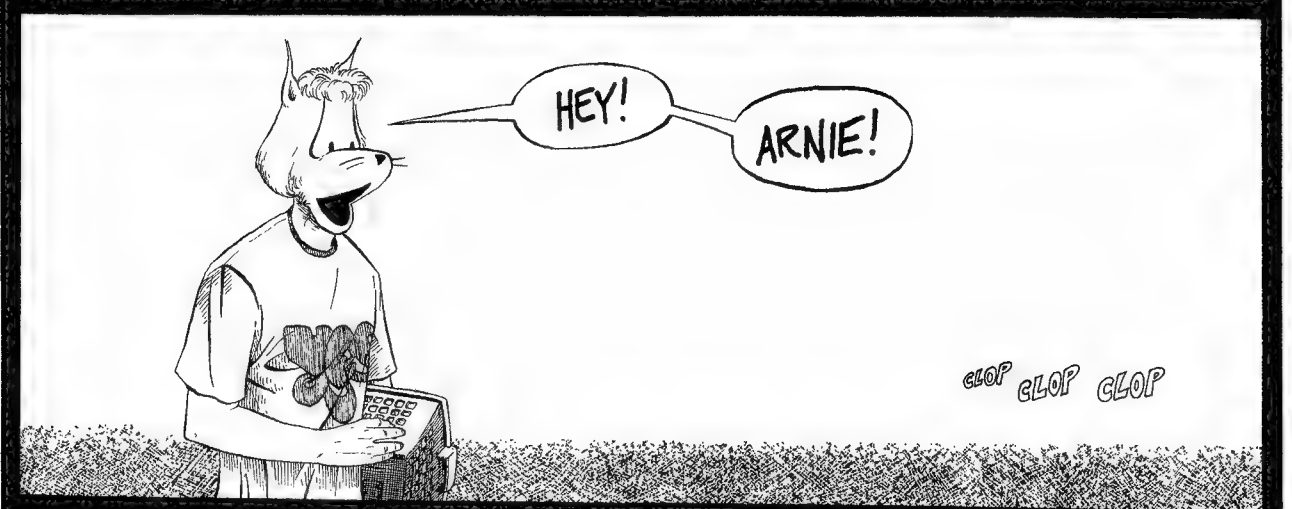
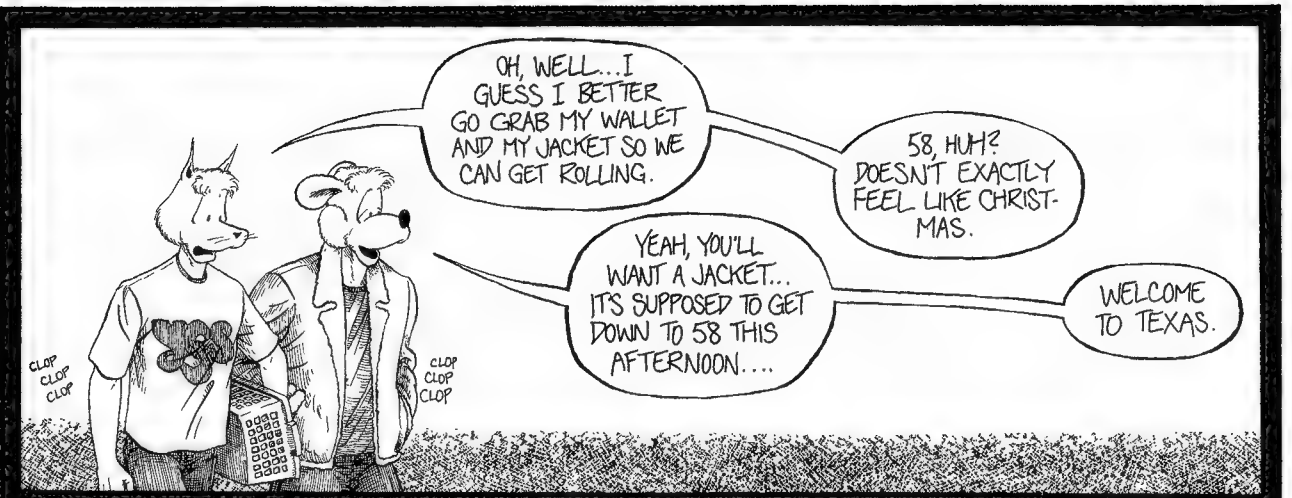


CONGRATULATIONS,
MAN... SERIOUSLY!

HEH HEH,
YEAH.

THANKS.
THANKS
A LOT.





SO LIKE I SAID, ABOUT READING...

MY FAVORITE STORYBOOK WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL WAS ABOUT THIS GIRL JUST LIKE ME WHO HAD DREAMS AT NIGHT THAT SHE WAS A PRINCESS IN SOME ENORMOUS PAVILION MADE OUT OF GOLD AND JEWELS AND WITH GREAT BIG CANDY CANES FOR COLUMNS.

ALL HER TOYS WERE THERE AND THEY CAME TO LIFE, AND THEY ALL WENT ON NEATO ADVENTURES.

I KNOW. IT SOUNDS LIKE SOME 'WIZARD OF OZ' RIPOFF. PROBABLY WAS. I DIDN'T GIVE A SHIT. I LOVED IT....

IT WASN'T 'TIL I WAS A TEENAGER THAT I STARTED HAVING DREAMS ABOUT MY OWN PAVILION, EXCEPT MINE WASN'T MADE OUT OF GOLD OR JEWELS OR CANDY.

IT WAS ALL LIKE WHITE TILE.

AND EVERY TIME I TRIED TO GO INSIDE THE DREAM WOULD TURN INTO THIS CRAZY NIGHTMARE AND I'D WAKE UP ON THE FLOOR OR SOMETHING. AND I'D BE FREAKED OUT FOR DAYS.

GOOD GUESS-NO, I NEVER COULD REMEMBER WHAT THE NIGHTMARE WAS.

SO I TOLD MYSELF IT DIDN'T MATTER.

AND THEN I STARTED SAYING **THAT** SO MANY TIMES AND IN SO MANY SITUATIONS I GUESS I STARTED LIVING BY IT: "IT DOESN'T MATTER."

NOTHING MATTERS.



EXCEPT ARNIE.

ARNIE MATTERS....



DR. CARRUTHERS...
DR. CARRUTHERS...
PICK UP FIVE-FIVE,
PLEASE... DR. CARRU-
THERS... FOUR-FIVE...

...KILLS OVER
TWICE AS MANY
GERMS AS THE NEXT
LEADING BRAND!...



NEXT : Into the Pavilions

DEAR **HEPCATS**

7117 WOOD HOLLOW DR., #1728, AUSTIN, TEXAS, 78731

Dear Mr. Wagner:

So this is what the much-ballyhooed **Hepcats** is like.

I'll be frank. When I first heard about it, I was less than enthusiastic. I know a lot of folks who are such fanatics about funny animal books that every one they see, they support and rave over; I'm not one of those people. For me to like a funny animal book, the creator really has to show me something. Like *Omaha the Cat Dancer* does. Or like *Cerebus*. Or, to use a slightly more esoteric example, *The Adventures of Capt. Jack*. Something like that is what it takes before I'll jump on any funny animal band-wagons.

I was also less than thrilled when I saw the cover illustration. (Which, I might add, is far from your strongest work. The inside material is much tighter and more eye-pleasing.) Not only is the cover illo kind of dopey-looking (sorry), but it seemed to me that this was just going to be another in the series of funny animal rip-offs of *Love and Rockets*, of which I've seen all too many of late.

In my own long-winded way, what I'm trying to tell you is that all of these first impressions turned out to be completely in the wrong. To my immense surprise, your interior artwork is far better than what I saw on the cover, and if there was any effort to cop a *Love and Rockets* feel in this book, I couldn't find it. It was obvious you were going for more of the day-to-day life trauma as shown in *Omaha* and *Open Season*, which is another under-rated book of my experience. And, even more surprising, you do what you do quite well. Finding someone who is as talented a writer as he is a cartoonist is still something of a rarity these days; you've impressed the living hell out of me.

This, in a nutshell, is why I'll be supporting your little opus. I didn't think I would be at first, but this reminds me why I still bother to try out new books when I'm convinced I won't like 'em. Sometimes, just sometimes, it turns out I'm wrong, and we all get a nice little surprise.

DAVID PEATTIE
CONCORD, CA

Well, David, I'd rather have one discriminating reader with a low bullshit threshold than a hundred fanboy dweebs whose only interest in my book is for its investment value, or something similarly CBG-ish. To be honest I think the cover for #1 was pretty drab myself—which is why I offset the visuals with odd typographical layout and silver ink—but when you consider it was my first water-color drawing after a lifetime of pencil and pen-and-ink, I guess I got the job done. How have you liked these last two covers?

Howdy!

I enjoyed the premiere issue of **Hepcats** very much—it reminded me of way too many lectures I day-dreamed/slept through.

Is it coincidence that **Hepcats** is also on the single page section of *Cerebus* reprint #17?

Please send me a copy of your first book. Thanks much! Looking forward to issue #2.

DAN ZIMMERMAN
MINNEAPOLIS

Hmm...a coincidence? Actually, I'd come close to giving up on Mr. Sim. Turns out the timing was perfect.

To Mr. Martin Wagner,
Greetings & hello there. This letter has been written (well, typewritten)

to you for the business of purchase. I have seen the book **Hepcats** at a local comic shop called Brainstorm Comics in downtown Frederick, Md. Intrigued, I slapped down my \$2.00 for the book and was thoroughly pleased. I can't wait for the next book to come out. I also enjoyed the "daydream/dungeon" scene. I looked through the Dear Hepcats letters section reading the comments made by some comparing **Hepcats** to *Omaha the Cat Dancer*. This comparison I agree with, but your characters have no protruding tails between the top of the butt and the bottom of the spine and they have human-type appendages (i.e.: feet and hands) and they wear shoes over their feet. My god, can you think how painful it must be to walk around barefoot all day, every day, for your entire life?!? Thanks for letting me get some quips off my mind and now on to the purchase. I saw your ad for **Yo: The First Hepcats Book**. It's only \$11.00? "This must be worth it for \$11," I thought. So I would like to order one (1) copy. Thanks for your time & cooperation. See ya!

DAVID COMULADA
FREDERICK, MD

Dear Martin Wagner,

Yes, I would like to obtain **Yo: The First Hepcats Book**. Enclosed is a money order for \$11.00. Yes, I found **Hepcats'** premiere issue fantastic, the story, art, presentation, etc. was delightful, on time, the ultimate. I can not wait for more issues. Keep up the good hard work. Thank you,

ROBERT R. SCOTT, JR.
(RUSTY)

ALEXANDRIA, VA

Well, thanks a lot, Rusty, but as I'm

sure you know by now, I wasn't on time. Workin' on it, though, bud.

Hey Mr. Wagner,

Simply loved **Hepcats** number one. I'd compare more the first part to *Cerebus* (for silent storytelling) and the second part to *Omaha* (for characterization). Very well done anyway.

I want a copy of **Yo**, so I enclose a money order. The strips shown in **Hepcats** 1 were hilarious, especially the library ID one.

A very good, professional quality product. I'll be looking and waiting for future issues, and spreading the book's existence in computer networks' comics discussion...Hey, I think you deserve it!

Best regards and good luck,
NIAL MACCONAILL
HULL, QUEBEC

On a BBS, yet. Thanks. Really!

Dear Martin;

Welcome to California! At least, welcome to **Hepcats**. Nice to see some new anthropomorphic comics appearing. I must say that when I ordered **Hepcats** I was prepared to be amused and entertained. I did not expect to be dazzled. The comparison with some of America's best cartoons is much deserved.

Keep those **Hepcats** goin'!
Sincerely,

DAVID WHITE
CUPERTINO, CA

Mr. Wagner,

On a recent trip to Cleveland, Ohio, I'd purchased a copy of **Hepcats** in a suburban comic emporium. I found the story simple, yet intelligent enough on a grown-up level. The illustrations were well done, and the format was somewhat reminiscent of Ralph Bakshi's animated version of Robert Crumb's *Fritz the Cat*, but without overdoing the explicitness of it. (In my book, some nudity and suggestive sex scenes are enough; go beyond that, and nothing is left to the imagination.)

The characters, Joey and Gunther, are likable in their own unique ways (I tend to identify with Joey, myself, judging by his Walter Mitty-ish daydream and continuous misfortunes in the real [?] world, from issue #1).

Like most black-and-white independent comics, I expect its publication to be rather infrequent, despite the fact that **Hepcats** claims to be published every six weeks (the issue I bought in Cleveland, the May 26th one, came to the store on July 21st); therefore the idea of subscribing is a little remote for the time being. However, if popular support for your comic (like mine) comes to you in a large abundance, perhaps you'll be able to offer subscriptions to your readers. Keeping up with the orders will be a whole other matter, when that time comes.

Speaking of orders, I'd like to order a copy of **Yo**, so enclosed is a check, in the amount of \$11.00, for a copy of it.

Keep up the good work, Martin!

JED MARTINEZ
ELMONT, NY

*Well, now that I have a new printer, I believe you can expect to see some semblance of a publishing schedule in regards to **Hepcats**. But I don't have any plans at the present time to offer subscriptions. I'd like to see everyone supporting their local comics shops.*

Dear Martin,

Just a quik note to order a copy of **Yo** and to pat you on the back for the first issue of **Hepcats**. Kool to say the least. Viciously swell I'd dare say. Keep it up.

(Near) famous furry artist Brian Sutton and myself will have a dealer's table at the Armadillocon in Oct. Look for us. Ciao,

SHON HOWELL
SAN ANTONIO

Sorry, Shon. I don't get invited to Armadillocon. (There seems to be some anti-Martin Wagner sentiment

floating around some [not all] of the members of the Fandom Association of Central Texas; a good buddy of mine who's been involved in Texas fandom for years tells me I may have bruised a lot of egos back in my fandom days. Oh, well. Their problem, not mine.)

*However, I will be at the Dallas Fantasy Fair this Thansgiving. And I'll be listing any and all other con appearances in the pages of **Hepcats**.*

Dear Mr. Martin Wagner,

Congratulations on your premiere issue of **Hepcats**. I am very impressed.

I must admit that at first I passed up the opportunity to look very closely at the content. I picked up the issue and then just as quickly put down the issue. It looked interesting, but there are a lot of independents and too few dollars in the pocket.

Cerebus bi-weekly made me change my mind. The July 14, 1989 [#17] issue featured the **Hepcats** on the Single Page. That was one of the best pages of creative and original art that I have seen in a while. I just loved it. After just that one page, I needed more. The mag I passed up a few days ago because I thought it was just another independent in a sea of independents turned out to be very enjoyable.

I realize my error and will pay more attention to the wide variety of independents. We need more creative work and independent thought in the comic world. Keep up the great work.

Sincerely,
GREG CUNNINGHAM
ALEXANDRIA, VA

P.S. I like the idea [of] a comic about college life. It's the only one I know of and I think people will really enjoy it. I know I have. Thanks.

Good old Cerebus.... I'm glad I helped change your mind about independents, Greg. Now, if more fans like yourself were willing to change their preconceptions (though I can un-

derstand their wariness), well, life'd be ducky.

Oh, yeah...look for a poster/

print of the Cerebus bi-weekly single page sometime early-to-mid 1990.

nating list, Damijan. Hmm. 300 issues? I must confess I hadn't planned it out that succinctly yet. Hell, why not? I suppose if Big Dave can do it, so can I. Whatever the case, I'll keep drawing this book as long as people keep enjoying it. How about that?

Hello, Mr. Wagner,

Enclosed is a money order of \$11.00. Please send me a copy of **Yo: The First Hepcats Book**, as advertised in **Hepcats #1**.

I really enjoyed **Hepcats #1**. It is a nice introduction to your characters. The art (especially the anatomy) looks great and is skillfully rendered. Being a former college student (graduated from San Francisco State recently), I can identify with the ups and downs of campus life and what Joey and Gunther must go through. I hope to know more about your characters in future issues and from the **Yo** collection. I will be eagerly awaiting #2 and the introduction of Arnie and Erica.

I am a faithful follower of many funny animal/anthropomorphic comics. I enjoy the variety and versatility of such characters. I especially enjoy "animalistic" comics that break the stereotype that funny animals should be nothing but mindless, hyperkinetic clowns and instead portray the "furries" as realistic, "human" characters [who] have feelings, personalities and attitudes the reader can identify with. (They laugh! They cry! They get angry! Sometimes they screw up badly, sometimes they win some, sometimes they lose some...just like real people.) *Omaha*, *Erma Felna EDF* [?], and *Captain Jack* are prime examples. From first impressions, **Hepcats** falls into this very select group. I hope this "human" approach will continue in future issues.

I hope you will do well in sales and success in the future. Too many good black and white comics didn't survive that B&W glut a while back. I hope **Hepcats** will make the cut this time, because it has a lot going for it.

Again, I'm looking forward to receiving a copy of **Yo** and buying the next issue of **Hepcats**. Keep up the good work! Sincerely yours,

ARTHUR YEE
SAN FRANCISCO



Hey Martin,

I am very selective about what comics I read, but I've got to hand it to you: **Hepcats** is great. I promised myself last year that I would only collect one comic regularly, but now I guess I'll have to make an exception. The art and the story line are both very good in **Hepcats**. It is a rare talent to be able to combine these talents proficiently; you seem to have

this talent.

I wish you luck on this project you have embarked upon. However, you better keep putting **Hepcats** out because once I start collecting a comic, I hate leaving it. **Hepcats** forever (or at least until #300)!

DAMIJAN SACCIO
NEW HAVEN, CT

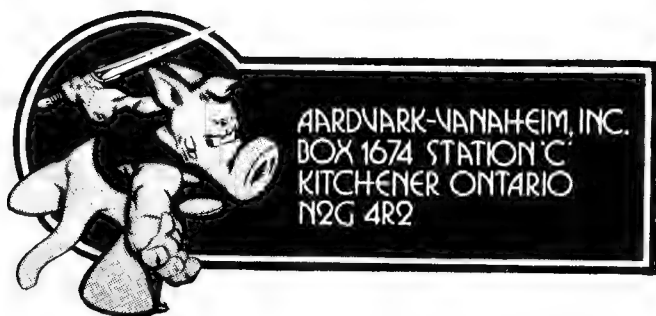
Glad the 'Cats made your discrimi-

Okay, so you don't have the characters humping like crazed weasels. Darn. I'll still read **Hepcats** over *Omaha* any day.

The relative amorality of the book was refreshing as well. One of the reasons I quit reading *Omaha* was that the characters were so full of this self-righteous indignation against authority of any sort (government, school, doctors); not to mention big business. It was loathsome and depraved to be employed by anything more economically powerful than a 7-11. This grates on your nerves after a while.

Hepcats #2 was stunning. The first issue was a pleasant surprise, but the second is just...it is sublime. Once again, I'm at a loss: did this simply spring full blown from the head of Zeus? The art, particularly the backgrounds, is stunning. The humor is handled deftly; the interplay between characters is realistic

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE



August 2, 1989.

Double Diamond Press
7117 Wood Hollow Dr., #1728
Austin, Texas
78731

Dear Martin:

Congratulations on your first issue of Hepcats.

I hope that I was not the inspiration for your "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Asshole" back cover, but that is probably wishful thinking.

Your progress between the beginning and end of the issue is impressive. You should feel very proud.

Don't look down; don't look back.

With admiration,



Dave Sim

President, Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc.,

and effective. In **Yo** the relationship stories seemed rather disconnected, I assume because of the limited format, but in **Hepcats** the comic book you've come into your own. The characters expand from the cramped four-panel arrangement to fill the page and the book, as if that's what they were meant for all along.

And I should compliment you on your hands and feet. Other parts of your figures might not look right occasionally, but your hands and feet are always perfect. You must have someone model especially for them.

In a futile attempt to balance out the huge gushing of adoration that fills the rest of this letter, I should say that I don't like the title **Hepcats** very much. (HA HA see Martin WILT under the sharp BLOW of criticism.)

By the way I KNOW now that you've been reading *Cerebus*. The symptoms are all too clear, especially to someone like me who's been under the same influence for a couple of years.

Anyway BRAVO swell job. I hope you're coming to the Armadillo Con in October; I'd be delighted to meet

you. When I'm not drooling over all the cyberpunk writers who are going to be there—including your pal Lewis Shiner whom I'm a big fan of—I'll be at a table with a couple of artist friends of mine...one of whom is the esteemed Shon Howell, who sent you a letter already I believe. 'till then,

MATT BROERSMA
SAN ANTONIO

Lengthy Post Script.

I am a small press writer and artist who's only recently become interested in funny animals. You may have heard of the small press: luminaries like Frank Miller, Scott McCloud and Los Bros Hernandez have worked in it at one time or another, and McCloud wrote a small press review column for *Amazing Heroes* for a while. I've been publishing a "barbarian" minicomic called *Throkk* for a little over two years now, though I don't in fact like barbarian comics. It was inspired by *Cerebus* more than anything else (I've since made efforts to get away from the Sim influence). More recently I got to know a few artists who, mostly through sheer persistence, turned me on to funny animals. I've now got two (count em) projects in the works with animals as the characters: the first is working title *Fox Bros.*, a slice-of-life comic not unlike **Hepcats** #1; the second project is working title *Cyberfox*, an adventure story more or less in the cyberpunk mold. I've written around eight scripts for *Fox Bros.*, and have produced three plates based on the *Cyberfox* concept (cashing in on a comic before it's even scripted was the original brainchild of Brian Sutton and Shon Howell, the shameless opportunists that they are). I've also written and laid out a couple of short strips tangential to the main *Fox Bros.* storyline.

I'm a fan of Los Bros Hernandez, Dave Sim and Ger, Alan Moore, Paul Chadwick, Scott McCloud, William Gibson, Bernard Shaw, Hunter Thompson, and a smattering of other nice people.

THE PIZZAMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE



Well, Matt! I must say, your letter damn near made my flattery meter explode, but I thank you all the same. I wish you all the best with your projects.

San Diego was my first comic con as a pro, and I'll tell you, I was astounded to see the vast amount of work being produced in mini-comics. They're a really cool little venue for people on the rise. I must have had a million of them thrust into my hands, covering all areas of interest in comics fandom. And another thing that caught me completely by surprise was the tightly-knit organization of funny-animal fans (based mostly on the West Coast), many of whom had heard of **Hepcats** and were fans, despite the book's brand-newness. I mean, I knew there were funny-animal fans out there, but finding clubs and cliques devoted to the genre was fascinating, and I met a lot of terrific people, both pro and fan.

By now, I'm sure you've read my reply to Shon Howell and you know where I stand with the people who run the protracted cocktail party known as Armadillocon. But you can catch me in Dallas. Adios.

Dear Mr. Wagner—

I am moved to write about your book **Hepcats**—which seems to mirror life here at the U of I. I am employed at the big U, and also deliver pizza to the students here.

I am impressed by your work, as it is fresh, original, and appeals to the average comic buyer here, (or at least where I buy my comics, anyway).

Also find enclosed a check for \$11.00 for your compilation book.

I picked up this book (and issue 2) by chance; I thumbed thru it, and decided to buy it. Looks like you've got another subscriber here.

Thanx for making my world a little brighter.

MIKE KAPPES
URBANA, IL

PS—How much for a *Shasta* Says T-shirt? (Men's large.)

PPS—The *Daily Illini* has nothing to compare with **Hepcats**. (The *DI* is the U of I's daily here.)

Well, if you really want one, send a registered check or a money order for \$12.00 and I'll send you one. Not to sound rude—I just had no idea anybody would be interested in a T-shirt for a defunct strip. Thanks for the interest—and for making my world a little brighter.

Martin,

Gee, what a swell comic! (Can I call you Marty?) I really dig your art and the stories aren't half-bad either. Although this dealing with life, love, hopes, dreams, etc. makes for good writing, it can get a tad dull if not enough humor, or other keen distractions are present. That's just constructive criticism. I mean, I thought that in issue #1, Joey's daydream was hilarious! Anyway, I have enough faith in **Hepcats** to rationalize the purchase of *Yo*. Please send me a copy if any are left.

Thanks Marty,

JOHN FRIZZELLE
OCEANSIDE, CA

*One copy of *Yo* coming up. And no, you can't call me Marty.*

Dear Martin:

Enclosed is a check for \$11.00. Please send me a copy of *Yo*. I just read the first two **Hepcats**. Such intensity of visual expression must require a limited issue artistic license. Where the hell do I get one?

Devoted and aghast reader,

JORDAN MONTGOMERY
DES MOINES, IA

You gotta get it the old-fashioned way, Jordan: ear-r-r-r-rn it.

Mr. Wagner,

Just a short long-distance note to let you know that your comic **Hepcats** is being read and enjoyed as far as Winnipeg. I noticed circulation dropped from issue #1 to issue #2 (nothing astonishing there), but I'm sure those numbers will start

increasing soon, due to a few fans all over the place.

Anyways, I find it really interesting that you began in comics doing a daily strip and found it the logical step to move on to comic books. And in issue #2, you mention that you're already starting an ongoing tale within the **Hepcats** book. I shudder to think of what the next logical step is and how soon you shall experiment with it. I guess it's all part of the process of finding the right venue for your work. I'm also curious as to whether or not you are still writing the **Hepcats** daily strip.

Also, please find enclosed a cheque for *Yo*, your first collection of daily strips. If your first edition is sold out, feel free to hold on to my money until your second edition appears. Thanks.

JEAN-GUY BRIN
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

No, the daily strip was discontinued in May, and those of you who read in Amazing Heroes Preview Special #170 that the sequel would be appearing by Christmas got some premature info. Looks like summer '90 instead, accompanied by a much larger Gaggus Hilarius story.

Since sales for #4 look as if they're doing the same as #3 (my having been run months late by my first printer does seem to have taken its toll on orders), I guess the next logical step was detailed on the inside front cover of this issue—getting help from all of those “fans all over the place” to spread the word and wake up the dealers.

Oh, by the way, Jean, how come everyone in Canada has cool names?

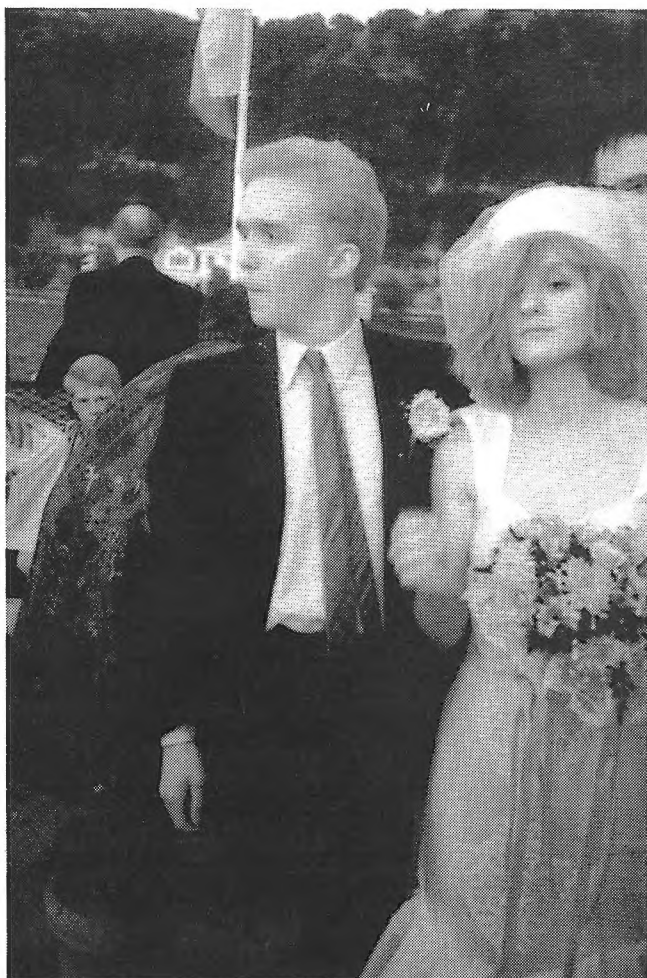
DEALERS!

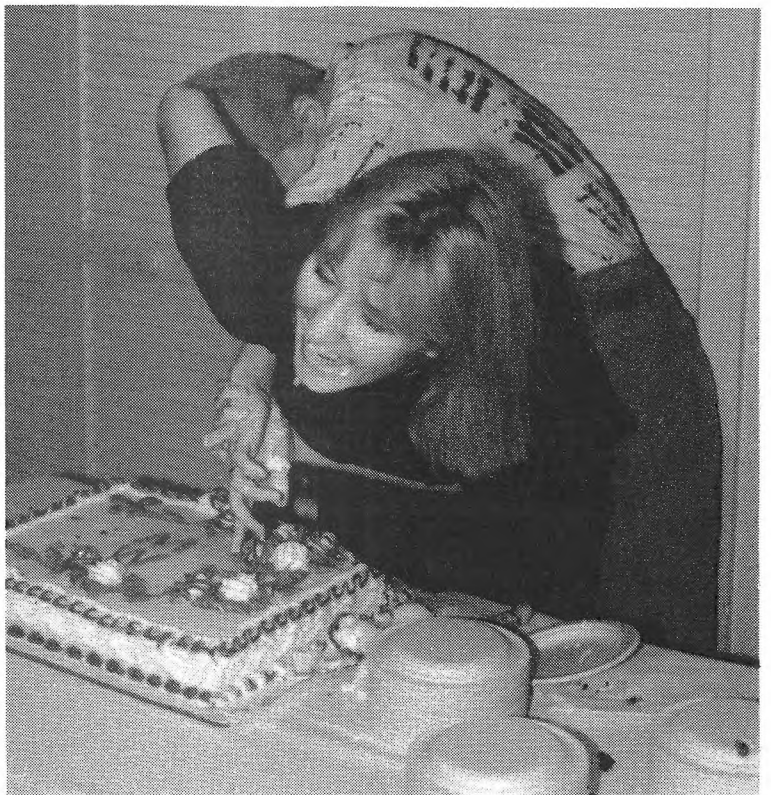
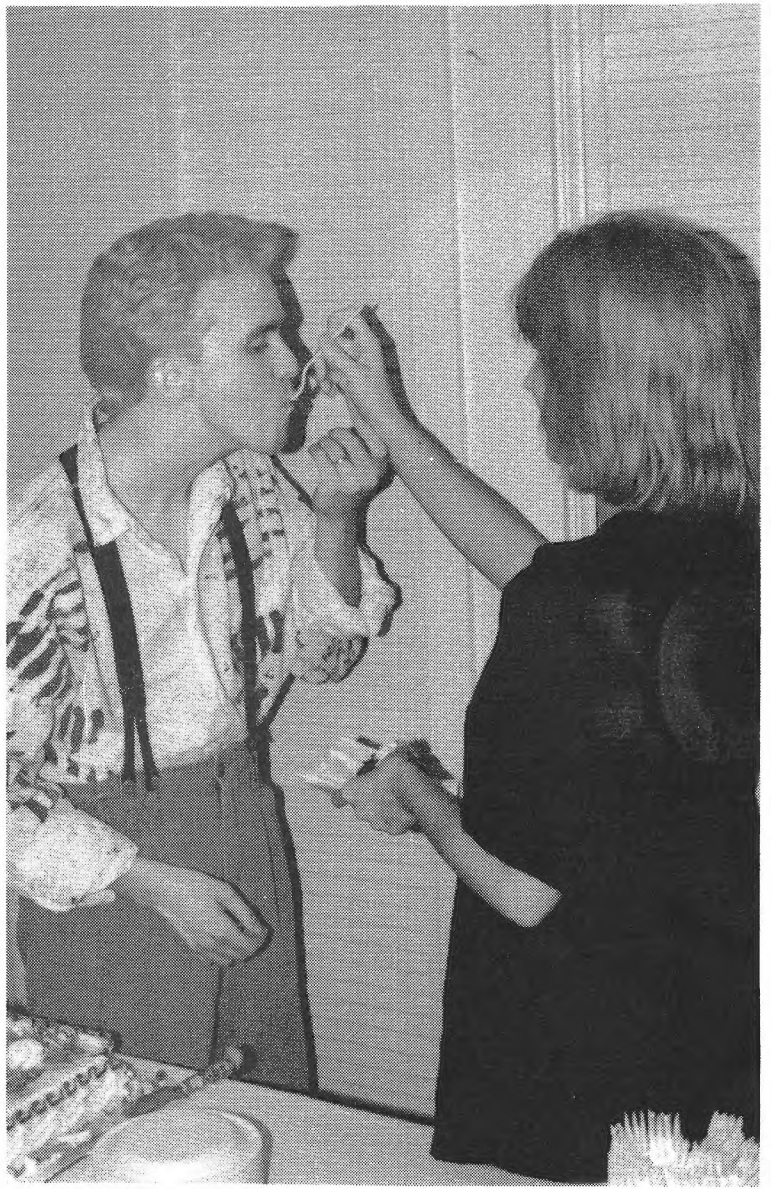
Having trouble re-ordering **HEPCATS** through your distributor? Re-order through Double Diamond directly! Call [512] 343-0452 and we'll fix you up. (Minimum draw: 10. Re-orders only.)

RIVERBOAT ROMANCE

A FULL MOON, FAJITAS AND BEER, AND NO ONE THROWING UP OVER THE SIDE! WOTTA NITE!

(Below) Tifanie flashes her alluring-est "Woman-on-the-Verge-of-a-Nervous-Breakdown" smile while (bottom) groomsman John F. Moore gasps, "Christ! I'm glad it isn't me...." (Right) While posing for paparazzi, Martin casts a careful eye river-ward for signs of an approaching speedboat, lest escape proves necessary.





The happy nuptial couple, unaware that the cake has been thoroughly spiked with some exotic Far Eastern hyper-aphrodisiac, suddenly find themselves unable to wait until they get home.

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